

**11 November, 1911**

**GREEN**

*0 killed      0 injured*

A possible tornado destroyed a house and a tobacco shed near Monticello.

**11 November, 1911**

**DANE**

*0 killed      0 injured*

A possible tornado destroyed buildings in the Town of Albion. A barn was destroyed near Oregon.

**11 November, 1911**

**GREEN/ROCK**

*12 killed      50 injured      35 mile path length      0.25 mile average width      F4*

Beginning at 2:00 pm, a tornado traveled north-northeast from the Town of Avon, and through the community of Hanover. The tornado skirted the northwest edge of Janesville, and then passed between Milton and Milton Junction, to a point in the Town of Lima, 4 miles northeast of Milton. The tornado finally dissipating in the extreme northeast corner of Rock County. Nearly \$1 million in damage was reported. The worst damage occurred near Orfordville and near Milton.

The tornado formed on the west riverbank near Brodhead, just north of Swallow Hollow, where a house and a barn were destroyed. A barn was destroyed on one farm and a house was destroyed on a second farm 2 miles north of Brodhead, killing one and injuring three. At least one farm was destroyed in the Town of Rock. The Willowdale Creamery and Willowdale School were destroyed. One person was killed near Orfordville.

The twister passed through the unincorporated community of Hanover, with a population around 150. The settlement was devastated, with all the houses, the hotel, the flour mill, the saloon, and the German Lutheran Church destroyed. The Milwaukee Elevator Company was badly damaged. A cow was buried in the rubble of a destroyed barn near Hanover, and was not extricated until 28 November. Although the cow survived by eating the hay that surrounded it, the cow was destroyed because it had sustained a broken leg.

A man and his two daughters were killed on a farm 0.75 mile east of Hanover. The man's son died later. All clothes except a corset were torn from the body of one of the victims, and the head of another victim was driven into the ground. A hog that was impaled on a board had to be destroyed. Another hog was reportedly cut in two by a plow, and on another farm a 6" x 6" board was driven through a cow. One person was killed on a farm 6 miles east of Hanover. A farm was destroyed 3 miles northwest of Janesville, and two farms were destroyed on the Footville Road, 2.5 miles northwest of Janesville. Two farms were destroyed when the tornado crossed the Madison Road 0.5 mile from Janesville. One person was killed 2 miles north of Janesville. On one farm, a buggy was "carried into a tree and bent around the trunk, where it hung, the rim of one hind wheel encircling the front axle."

Several houses, barns, and outbuildings were reportedly deposited in the Rock River as the tornado passed north of Janesville. The debris from the buildings reportedly floated downstream and piled up against a dam, presumably in Janesville.

The tornado struck the Janesville Road 2 miles south of Milton Junction, where two farms were destroyed, one farm was damaged, and several cows were killed. Several houses, the Christian Science House, and the Cooperative Gas Plant were destroyed, and several additional houses and businesses were damaged on the edge of Milton. A total of 14 buildings in addition to the gas plant were destroyed at Milton. Carbide cans from the gas plant were reportedly carried for miles. One person was killed and three injured in a house at Milton. The Saunders School, 0.5 mile from Milton, was destroyed. In the Town of Lima, two farms were totally destroyed. On one farm 5 miles northeast of Milton, a 5- or 6-year old girl was killed and her mother, aunt, and sister were

injured. At least eight other farms were damaged, with farm buildings destroyed on five of the farms. One other person was injured on one of the farms. Two additional fatalities occurred days after the twister, including one person with a broken back who lived until July, 1912.

Heavy rain and large hail followed the tornado. Heavy snow and blizzard conditions were reported later in the afternoon. By late the same evening, the temperature in Janesville had dropped to 0°F. The temperature in Madison, Wisconsin, the same day reached 64°F.

### **11 November, 1911**

### **WALWORTH**

*0 killed            0 injured*

Around 2:30 pm, a barn was destroyed by a possible tornado near Delavan. A barn was twisted and unroofed, a house damaged, and a windmill destroyed on the farm across the road. Schultz's Ice House and Wagon House were unroofed.

### **11 November, 1911**

### **WAUKESHA**

*0 killed            0 injured*

An apparent tornado formed in the northern portion of the Town of Genesee and raced north-northeastward. Roofs were blown off a barn and a house near the beginning of the tornado's path. Windmills were destroyed on two other farms. The windmill on the water tank at Wales was destroyed. A barn on a farm north of Wales was unroofed and the building was badly twisted. The implement building on another farm was destroyed. The twister toppled a steel tower down on the electric interurban line between Waukesha and Waukesha Beach. The tornado then moved into the Town of Lisbon, where a windmill was destroyed and roofs were damaged on several buildings on one farm. Windows were blown out of the house, and the hen house was destroyed. A wagon shed and machine shed were also blown off their foundations and twisted.

I've included evidence of five tornadoes that day in Wisconsin. Of the four remaining events, I feel relatively confident that one (the Waukesha County storm) was most likely a tornado; the others are reports of wind damage that may or may not have been caused by tornadoes. Clearly, the big news story was the Rock County tornado so information on the other events has proven to be sparse.

### **Sources for the Rock County tornado:**

*Wisconsin Tornadoes*, M.W. Burley and P.J. Waite, Wisconsin Academy of Sciences, Arts, & Letters, V. 54, 1965

Wisconsin State Climatologist database of tornadoes

*Significant Tornadoes*, Thomas Grazulis (Tornado Project)

Janesville Gazette

Watertown Times

Marshfield Times

Door County News (Sturgeon Bay)

Fort Wayne (IN) Journal – Gazette

Eau Claire Leader

Stoughton Daily Courier Hub

Waukesha Freeman

Information for the other storm events came from one or more of the cited newspapers, with the most information coming from the Waukesha Freeman. I found no information (or at least no additional information) in the following newspapers:

Elkhorn Independent  
Oregon Observer  
Monroe Journal – Gazette